

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Replace the paragraph on page 4, between lines 1-13 of the specification with the following:

Preferably an alumina component according to the invention is made according to the process described hereafter. An aqueous slurry with a solid loading of 41 wt-% was prepared at pH=9 from TM-DAR corundum powder [average particle size $0.2 \leq \mu\text{m}$; make Boehringer Ingelheim Chemicals, Japan] without any further additives. A high degree of dispersion was obtained after at least 1 day of ultrasound or at least half a day of wet ball milling, using milling beads that could not give rise to contaminations other than alumina or wear which can be oxidized. An additive or dopant selected from the group formed by oxides of Mg, Y, Er and La was then introduced by the addition of pure and finely grained oxide powder of the said dopant. The average particle size of the dopant or additive is preferably chosen smaller than the alumina crystal size obtained after sintering and HIP treatment. Alternatively the additive or dopant can be introduced by a

precursor containing one or more of the elements Mg, Y, Er and La. Reference samples without additive were prepared in the same way, except that no dopant was added.